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Daniel Wallace/Herald

During Ash Wednesday services, the Rev. Darell Venters places ashes on the forehead of Ashley Farley, 14, at the Newman Center on College Street. Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the Lenten season.



From the Ashes



BY ERICA WALSH
Herald reporter

The Rev. Darell Venters has placed ashes on the foreheads of about 10,000 people in his 11 years working for the Catholic church.

"The ashes are used as a public sign of repentance, a willingness to change one's life," said Venters, the chaplain at the Catholic campus center. "It is and has been a very public act in the Old and New Testaments, and in early practices of the church."

Each year, Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the Lenten season. Lent represents the 40 days Jesus spent in the

desert. During Lent, people usually try to make a positive change in their lives, such as giving up a bad habit or making adjustments that will accentuate their spirituality. These sacrifices are made to represent Christ's sacrifice for humanity. The ashes themselves are a sign of repentance and change.

When the ashes are placed on the forehead, it shows a person's willingness to change or improve their life.

"It's saying our relationship with God could be better," Venters said. "We are admitting we are sinners, and that we are willing to recommit to Christ."

For some people, the ashes remain on their foreheads for only a short time,

until they are washed off. Others allow the ash to remain until it fades away.

"I don't wash them off," Florence sophomore Lauren Millard said. "It's just how I was raised."

Although Venters believes that every Catholic knows the true meaning of the ashes, some members also have a personal interpretation of what the ashes mean to them.

"Just that we came from dust, and that's where we return to," Millard said.

Lebanon freshman Tyler Lee looks at the ashes as a symbol of giving up something that is important to you.

"Christ did it for us," he said, "so it's something we should do for him."

Forensics team to defend title in Paris

BY JACOB BENNETT
Herald reporter

Last year, six Western students took on the world and won. Round two is coming up, and this time they're bringing along six of their friends to make sure they win again.

Western's forensics team travels to Paris Friday to defend the World Championship title it won last year in Rome. Then the students were just a small school from Kentucky. This year they're defending champs.

"Obviously we have a reputation to uphold," said Florence sophomore Alisa Pomananta, who did not go to Rome last year. "That puts added pressure."

But if the team is feeling that pressure, they're hiding it well. They said they have been preparing all year, and they're looking at it as a chance to prove that their victory wasn't a fluke.

"We want it worse this year now that we know we can do it," said Evansville senior Matt Gerbig, one of the six returning to the competition. "Just stepping off the plane and saying, 'Hey, I'm a world champion' would be a good feeling."

Western took only six members to Rome because the team didn't know how they would do in the competition, and its budget is tight.

"Just stepping off the plane and saying, 'Hey, I'm a world champion' would be a good feeling."

— Matt Gerbig
Evansville senior

The university has increased the team's budget over the years so that it can build on past successes. Woodring estimated it

costs about \$1,500 per student to send them to Paris for a week.

Now that they know they can win, the team is bringing a group of 12. Because schools rack up points according to the number of students who place in competitions, a larger squad increases the chances of winning. The number of students schools take varies, but some have taken as many as 30.

Students are selected based on their performances through the year. They earn points based on how they finished in competitions, and the top point-getters are going to France.

Ironically, for the second straight year, they'll be in Europe

SEE FORENSICS, PAGE 9

Insurance changes rethought

BY JIM GAINES
Herald reporter

Faculty and staff will probably keep their current doctors through 2000. The insurance advisory committee voted yesterday not to change the provider network offered by Western's self-insurance plan.

Human Resources Director Tony Glisson said by e-mail March 2 that he was considering switching on July 1 to a shorter list of doctors offered by MedBen, which administers the plan. That would save about \$200,000, he said.

Many faculty and staff complained, saying the change would violate the one-year deal they signed. Glisson called another meeting to revisit the problem yesterday.

"We had a recommendation, but I've got to get it endorsed by the president," Glisson said yesterday evening. "I won't be able to do that before the morning, so I can't comment on that right now."

But committee members confirmed their recommendation was to keep the current system.

"I think what carried the day here was that there were enough employees that objected to the change, and they showed concern," said committee member Joel Philhours, an accounting and finance professor. "It is rather unusual on this campus for employees to independently make their views known, but I think this will show that they're listened to."

"We sign up as employees on a calendar year basis, so there appears there will be no change for the calendar year," he said. "For calendar year 2001, who knows what will happen?"

SEE INSURANCE, PAGE 6

INSIDE

Profiler lectures at Western

Serial murder profiler Ronald Holmes spoke in DUC Theatre last night. He shared graphic details of his experiences in his field.
Page 6

Being safe over Spring Break

A guide on how to avoid the perils and pitfalls of one of the year's wildest vacations.
Divisions, Page 7

Lady Tops begin tourney

The women's basketball team opens play in the Sun Belt Conference Tournament at 6 tonight in Diddle Arena. The second-seeded Lady Toppers play No. 7 seed Louisiana-Lafayette.
Sports, Page 11



<http://herald.wku.edu>

Weather forecast

Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
73° 37°	67° 45°	50° 35°	51° 34°	56° 36°
Partly cloudy	Rain	Rain	Partly cloudy	Partly cloudy

R: 65°/37° windy
F: 62°/43° showers
S: 48°/33° rain
M: 49°/33° partly cloudy
T: 53°/35° partly cloudy

• Louisville

• Lexington

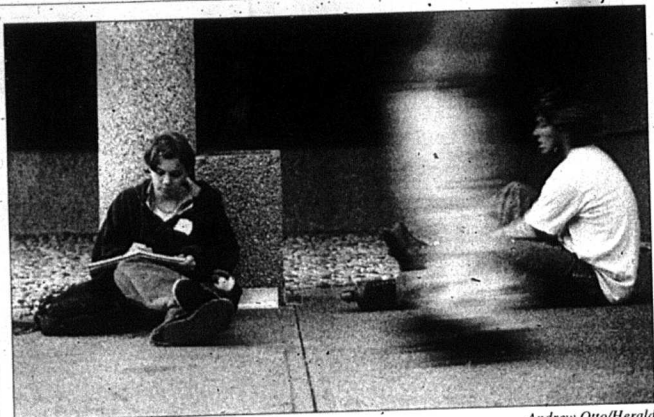
• Owensboro

• Paducah

• Nashville

Weather information provided by StormCenter 12, where you can get an updated forecast at 6 tonight.

STORM CENTER 12



Andrew Otto/Herald

Skating the day away: Warren Central High School student Gerri Shields, left, 17, entertains herself with a sketchbook while her boyfriend Todd Wiley, 18, adjusts his inline skates while cruising around fine arts center yesterday evening. Wiley plans on attending Western after graduating from high school.

Crime Reports

Arrests

♦ Kathleen Emily Mardis, address unknown, was charged yesterday with DUI.

Reports

♦ Tess Delores McKinley, Career Services Center office coordinator, reported Monday that a parking sign valued at \$108 was stolen at the center.

Campus News
Western photojournalists honored in Pictures of Year contest

Three of Western's photojournalists received awards in the 57th Pictures of the Year competition.

Susie Post, professional-in-residence, won four awards in the magazine division for pictures published in National Geographic. Post received one first place award, one second

place award and two awards of excellence.

Jonathan Kirshner, a senior from Santa Cruz, Calif., won an award of excellence in the newspaper division's portrait/personality category.

Amber Woolfolk, junior from Los Angeles, received an award of excellence for her web site, handheldmagazine.com. The competition is sponsored by the National Press Photographers Association and the University of Missouri.

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Future of dorms to begin with handoff

Student Life transfer awaits appraisal

By JIM GAINES
Herald reporter

When dorm residents return from their week's vacation, they'll have a new landlord.

The Board of Regents plans to turn over the deed to Western's dorms and the land they occupy to the Student Life

Foundation after a special meeting March 15.

"There's one more resolution that the board has to take to formally authorize the transfer," President Gary Ransdell said.

The regents' earlier resolution must be changed to an actual order of sale, SLF attorney Steve Catron said.

The SLF is a private, non-profit corporation formed last summer to take over the dorms. Its plan is to sell \$50 million to \$75 million in tax-free bonds to pay off Western's debt and reno-

vate the dorms. Construction should start this summer, Ransdell said.

The transfer has awaited an appraisal of the dorms' value, which Ransdell expects will be completed in time to formally transfer ownership on Thursday, March 16.

"We fully expect the appraisal to come somewhere in the \$19 (million) to \$20 million range," he said.

The appraised value should be close to the outstanding debt on the dorms, he said.

The SLF will pay the debt plus the sale costs — about \$20 million, Catron said.

But the SLF has not yet sold any bonds, Ransdell said.

"I'm not sure how much time it'll take for the bond transaction to occur," he said. "That's out of our hands."

Catron said bond sale will begin in mid-April.

The special meeting was not called until Tuesday, when board secretary Liz Esters sent an e-mail asking when members could attend. Student Regent

Amanda Coates sent Ransdell an e-mail yesterday urging a meeting time before Wednesday so she could attend, but Ransdell said he couldn't be back from a trip to Frankfort until then. The time was set for 4 p.m. Wednesday, he said.

Coates said since she can not attend, she would write a statement for another board member to read on her behalf.

"I know I can't vote, but I still think it's my duty to make sure my opinion is heard," she said.

Congress voices concerns about Collegiate Health Care

By REX HALL JR.
Herald reporter

Some concerns of Student Government Association officials about student health services and insurance next year were stilled by Collegiate Health Care this week.

Officials from Collegiate and Student Health Services met with SGA President Amanda Coates and Vice President Cassie Martin Monday, and with the entire SGA Congress Tuesday, to address some of the concerns and questions the organization had previously expressed.

Paul Ferguson, vice president for Health Center operations at Collegiate, said a fee schedule for services should be finalized within the next week. Coates said last week it was "unacceptable" that Collegiate had not announced its new

prices yet and that students were being left in the dark.

Ferguson said the reason for the delay is that Collegiate has been researching average rates in Bowling Green and nationwide. The prices will be based on those rates, but will be discounted 20 percent, he said.

Ferguson also said the insurance plan that will be offered to students will not exclude birth control pills or coverage of injuries sustained while playing intramural sports, as was originally stated in a policy model.

"That was never intended to be a final exclusion," Ferguson said. "It was an honest mistake and it wasn't intentional. It makes no sense to exclude those groups of students. They need to be covered."

A committee consisting of Martin, Vice President of Student Affairs Jerry Wilder

"The whole purpose of this plan is to get students to use the Student Health Service."

— Cassie Martin
SGA vice president

and Student Activities and Organizations Director Scott Taylor is evaluating the different insurance options presented by Collegiate. The committee is considering including a \$100 deductible on the plan for services at other hospitals and clinics, except for emergency room use.

"The whole purpose of this plan is to get students to use the Student Health Service," Martin said.

Ferguson said the insurance plan is going to cost somewhere between \$500 and \$600.

SGA was also concerned with the fate of uninsured students.

Students covered under their parents' insurance would have bills for office visits sent to their parents.

Ferguson said Collegiate will also look to make adjustments for students who cannot afford any type of insurance. A portion of the reduced \$15 health fee, which will take effect next semester, will be used for treatment for students without insurance.

Ferguson said no student would ever be denied treatment, and that a gradual payment plan will be worked out for those students.

Hours of operation may also be extended after Collegiate's new clinic, scheduled to open next spring, becomes fully operational. Currently, the Health Center's hours are 8

a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

"That's a possibility in the future and if the need is there, we'll do it," said Beth Rush, associate director of the Health Center.

Ferguson said opening hours will be determined by feedback from students on what the best hours are for them.

"We are going to evaluate this and look at surveys, but even surveys aren't predictive on telling if extended hours are going to work," Ferguson said. "What is predictive is when you begin to expand your services beyond the student population to include employees."

The services will be extended to faculty when the clinic has the ability. Ferguson said he doesn't want the inclusion of faculty to negatively impact student care.

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Opinion

UCB, Coates need to be more realistic

Maybe Western will get really, really, really lucky. Maybe Scott Taylor, director of Student Activities and Organizations, will get a call today from a frantic Dave Matthews, desperate to book an open date in April. Yeah, and maybe pigs will fly. Sadly, that's the plan the University Center Board has for getting a concert at Western this semester. It's not conceding defeat, admitting to poor planning and moving on with plans for next semester. Like a college student on a Spring Break trip, they're hoping to get lucky.

But here UCB's chances of scoring are much worse than those of a tanned and toned student on the beach, and the problem is a lack of organization.

The university Concert Committee was set up last semester but has met just once.

So here's a solution to the concert problem.

Step 1. Meet. It sounds pretty far-fetched and will take some work, but we know you can do it.

Step 2. Be realistic. Admit that nothing's going to happen this semester and move ahead now with plans for next year. If you start now, you just might get a decent concert here.

It's a pretty simple two-step process that usually produces results.

If someone doesn't get the ball rolling soon, Student Government Association President Amanda Coates will have an interesting legacy — a big, fat, empty campaign promise.

Like American presidents, SGA presidents leave their mark long after leaving Western.

For former president Keith Coffman, it was his efforts to improve safety on University Boulevard.

Former president Kristen Miller, despite instituting Provide-A-Ride, is still remembered for claiming there was not a parking problem on campus.

What will it be for Coates? A Coffman success or a Miller gaffe?

It was her promise so she should step in and take charge of the situation.

Or maybe Coates is just hoping to get lucky.

The issue: The University Center Board hopes to get lucky and land a concert at Western.

Our view: UCB's concert committee should be more realistic.



Y'see, we're running out of time here. We REALLY need a musical act... and, well... the students would LOVE it!



Letters to the Editor

Students deserve support

I attended the performance of "Pippin" last week and I was very impressed with the high caliber of talent that was showcased in the play. The students and faculty involved did an outstanding job of entertaining the audience. The acting and singing skills were appreciated by all in attendance as well as the comedic timing displayed by the performers. All of the "behind the scenes" personnel did an incredible job ensuring that the stage, music and lighting accented the performance.

Western is extremely fortunate to have such talented and dedicated students in its music and theater departments. These students not only have the core practice consistently and they must also perform in many ensemble productions related to their major. Working in the music department, I see first hand the extra hours involved in a performance. The students work hard to present their

many skills during the school year. These students deserve our attendance and support for their recitals and productions.

Please make an effort to attend the various musical and theatrical performances on campus and in the community. I am sure you will enjoy the creative and entertaining abilities of our students and will be proud of their numerous accomplishments.

Carol Porter
music department office assistant

Broome didn't 'bow down'

When I read the commentary by Rusty Broome, I thought that I had pretty much written the end of his article for him by the time I was halfway through it. "Britney and Backstreet suck, Korn and Limp Bizkit RULE!" is what I was frightened I was about to read. But I was happily surprised when I read that he gave musical props to Tom Petty, the Red Hot Chili Peppers and Pearl

Jam. I am glad that Mr. Broome did not bow down to pop culture and that I did not waste minutes of my day reading another Total Request Live-Celebrity Deathmatch of Britney/Backstreet kids versus Korn/Limp kids.

Melanie Turner
Nashville freshman

Letters to the editor

Letters to the editor must be less than 250 words, typewritten and signed by the author.

Please include your phone number, hometown and class identification or job title.

The Herald reserves the right to edit letters for style and length. Also, the Letters to the Editor section may not run in every edition because of space constraints.

Submit your letters to the editor or commentaries from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Herald Office in 122 Garrett Conference Center.

Or you can send them via email to herald@wku.edu.

Will you attend the women's Sun Belt Conference Tournament?



"Yeah, I'd like to catch as many (games) as possible."
Phillip White
Glasgow junior



"No, I'm going home."
Michelle Sutherland
Owensboro senior



"No, I've got too much other stuff to do."
Andy Davis
senior from Stayton, Ore.



"I don't know. I didn't know they were playing."
Cindy Herrington
Franklin freshman



"I hope so, if time permits."
Joyce Walker
Louisville junior

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BEER: So much more than just a breakfast drink

I have some good news today (instead of the usual ranting and complaining).

Good news, that is, for all you students looking for an excuse to spend Spring Break getting plastered, hammered, wasted, bombed, smashed, wired, juiced, flat-out liquored up. Or at least a little intoxicated.

Not that most of you will need an excuse, of course, but I'll give it to you anyway. And it comes from a pretty unexpected source: PETA, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals.

I found a press release from the organization in my mailbox at the Herald office the other day, and it immediately caught my attention. The message: Beer, my friends, is healthier than milk!

That's right, the press release was headlined "Got beer? PETA urges students to

dump dairy. Research shows beer is better than milk."

Since PETA obviously does not have any kind of ulterior motive at all in spreading this message, but is only worried about the welfare and well-being of us college students, I read on, enchanted and encouraged about this uplifting and believable message.

PETA pointed to research done by "savvy health officials" when telling me that "the foam moustache should be from a brew, not a 'moo.'"

"Hot damn!" I thought. My excitement increased when PETA started listing the indisputable evidence as to just why a good Pilsner is better than "the white stuff." Here are their main points:

◆ Beer has zero fat; milk is loaded with it.



News & Notes
Mattias Karén

◆ Beer has half a gram of fiber in every cup; milk has no fiber whatsoever.

◆ Milk is "sky-high" in sodium, while beer only has 12 milligrams of sodium per 122 milligrams.

◆ Instead of strengthening the bones, milk actually "leaches" calcium from the bones. PETA proves this point by

pointing out that in the United States, Norway and my great motherland Sweden (the three countries highest in dairy consumption), women also "have the highest rates of osteoporosis in the world." They also live longer than in just about any other part of the world, but that's beside the point, I guess.

PETA also referred to its new Web site, www.milksucks.com, for more reasons to dump milk for good.

But just as I was getting ready to pour some Heineken on my Cocoa Pebbles, Danita Kelley, a dietetics assistant professor, put a pin in my wheel of bliss. Kelley delicately called PETA's press release a "flawed argument," pointing out that dairy products, unlike beer, actually are included in the food pyramid. Also, she

said, dieticians are "not too concerned that people will have a drug dependency from consuming milk."

Well, now I'm confused. Beer or milk? Milk or beer? Could it actually be that PETA is more concerned about the way dairy cows are being treated (which actually is, by the way, a very valid concern), and is coming up with some desperate measures (including insulting the intelligence of every college student in the country) to stop it?

The only thing I can say for sure about drinking during Spring Break is this: Kids, whatever you do, stay away from the White Russians. Just like those crazy Commies to try to poison us with that unhealthy white fluid.

No, drink that vodka straight!

Dorm residents to get free papers

BY REX HALL JR.
Herald reporter

Three stacks of the day's news will be soon waiting each morning for students living in some dorms.

The Student Government Association passed a proposal Tuesday to have three different newspapers delivered to Rodes-Harlin and Hugh Poland halls, along with two other dorms that have yet to be selected.

Between March 20 and April 13, USA Today, The Wall Street Journal and possibly The Courier-Journal will be delivered daily for student use as part of a pilot program through USA Today. The program is free to the university.

SGA President Amanda Coates said if the program is successful, it might be something SGA and the

university could "come together" to fund over the next year.

"I think this gives students the opportunity to keep up on current events," Coates said. "It's also convenient and students can save a buck."

SGA had the option of placing the newspapers in Dining University Center and other high-traffic locations, but Coates said the organization chose to place them primarily in dorms so students would be emphasized in the program.

"We were afraid faculty and staff would take advantage of the student service," Coates said.

School of Journalism and Broadcasting Director Jo Ann Albers said the service will help

students be better informed on current events.

"Reading the newspaper will help them be better citizens, and better students," Albers said.

Coates said Rodes and Poland were chosen as two definite locations for delivering the papers because they are the Honors Leadership dorms. One female and one male dorm will also be chosen, Coates said, to demographically spread the papers all over campus.

Camille Johnson, hall director in Rodes, said she is excited about newspapers being delivered to her hall.

"I think it is a great idea," Johnson said. "A lot of people here read the newspaper, and I think they will utilize them as a tool."

Campus News

Career Fair March 21

Students looking for a job are invited to a career fair at the I-24 Expo Center in Nashville March 21.

More than 150 business, industry and government employers from Kentucky will be at the Nashville Area College to Career Fair looking for potential employees. The fair is sponsored by Western's Career Services Center along with 14 other universities. Only students and alumni from the participating schools are invited to the event.

The fair runs from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Free tickets to the fair can be picked up at the Career Services Center in Cravens Library, Room 216.

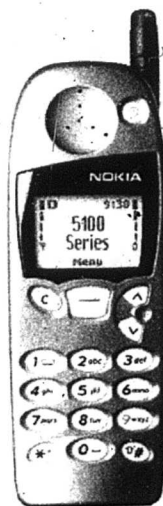
For more information, contact the Career Services Center at 745-3095.

Western to host European Community Roundtables

Western's Office of Global Business and Entrepreneurship will be hosting a series of European Community Roundtables in conjunction with the Global Automotive Conference 2000, which will be held in Bowling Green March 28-30.

Fifteen Foreign Service Officers will be on hand to answer questions about the commercial and economic changes underway in Europe.

The roundtables will be conducted from 8 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. March 31 at the University Plaza Hotel and Convention Center. Registration is \$85 for the session. For more information, call Raja Bhattacharya or William Parsons at 745-6864.



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Profiler provides insight on serial killers

By ABNEY BROWN
Herald reporter

It has been two years since Ronald Holmes was last able to sleep in his own bed.

Holmes, a sociology professor at the University of Louisville and a consultant profiling serial killers for many police departments, slept on the floor in front of his bedroom door to protect his family for years.

After viewing hundreds of brutal murder scenes, Holmes wanted to take every precaution to make sure nothing like that happened in his home.

Holmes spoke with graphic detail about his many years profiling serial murder cases last night in front of about 150 people that gathered in DUC Theatre for his lecture "Sociology of Murder."

Holmes has had close contact with many notorious serial killers, including Ted Bundy, John Wayne Gacy and Douglas Clark.

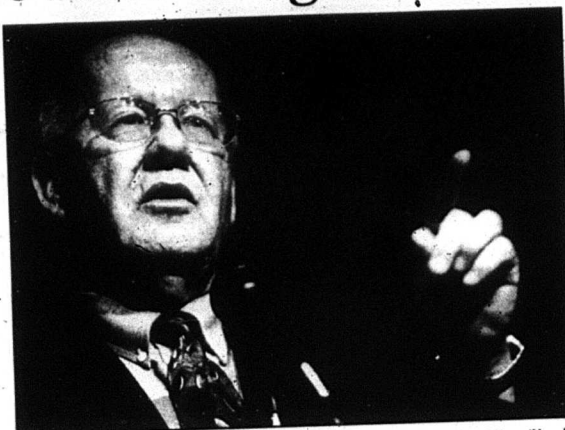
"I like Ted," Holmes said. "He was quite good at getting people to like him, he was charismatic."

Bundy killed about 400 people, starting at the age of 15 and stopping when he was 32.

Holmes has performed 527 psychological profiles on murder cases. His first case involved the murder of a friend's mother, whose murderer was mentally ill.

He said all serial killers don't have a mental illness, some are just evil. "There are such things as bad boys," he said, "and they grow up to be evil men."

Last night was Holmes' third visit to Western. Holmes' presentation in 1996 caused much controversy because of the



Jonathan Miano/Herald

Profiler Ron Holmes, 61, spoke in DUC Theatre last night about his encounters with serial killers and their motives. "It's not like you see it on TV."

graphic nature of the slides showing victims and crime scenes.

Criminology Club President David Murf, a Bowling Green junior, said the slide projector was broken last night so there was no

slide presentation.

"We were hoping this would have a big impact on the students and the criminology and sociology programs," Murf said.

Despite the absence of slides, Murf said

the program was still powerful.

"I learned a lot," he said. "When I think of serial murders I think of like 10 to 15 people, but there were some big numbers like 60 to 400. I can't imagine that."

Holmes said he had his "own Hannibal Lecter," Manny, who began killing when he was six and did not stop until he was caught at age 32.

He said Manny's partialisms, or the body parts he was obsessed with, included "blond-haired, blue-eyed, undeniably young cheerleader-type girls."

Holmes, without emotion, recited an 18-page letter that Manny wrote to Holmes describing one of his evenings.

"Once again the wiles of the female bitches defeated me. How dare she I am the ultimate man, the epitome of masculinity, power and glory," Holmes recited. "my meal, I hunger for her. Neither food nor alcohol could fulfill what was eating me from within. I ate last night, and I slept."

There are probably 100 to 150 serial killers in the world today, most of whom will not be caught, Holmes said.

Bardstown senior Connie Boree said she was upset there was not a slide show, but still thought the program was effective.

"He was an excellent speaker," Boree said. "I was pleasantly surprised and just really enjoyed the program."

Even after all these years, Holmes says the violent images of his work still, and always will, get to him.

"I have terrible nightmares," Holmes said. "It is especially hard when the cases involve kids, but you get a real high when someone is arrested in a case you are working on."

INSURANCE:

Plan not likely to change

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

Committee member Libby Greaney, director of the Student Health Service, agreed.

"I believe the decision was to not change the policy mid-year and I think that's what most people were uncomfortable with," she said.

The self-insurance plan, projected to run a \$600,000 surplus its first year, ended up \$21 million in debt. After reinsurance pays off, the university still has to cover \$1.07 million by itself in the next four months. Based on claims so far this year, it'll be over budget again, said Ann Mead, chief financial officer.

The committee only makes recommendations, which Glisson takes to President Gary Ransdell and the Administrative Council. The final decision is theirs.

"We simply discuss the issues and support Tony the best way we can, but I think his decision to revisit the situation shows his great sensitivity to the feelings of the faculty and staff," Greaney said.

The meeting was open, but committee members Ed Wolfe, an accounting and finance professor, Carl Kell, a communication professor, and Sharon Hartz, a College of Education and Behavioral Science office coordinator, refused to comment on their recommendation.

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- two faculty members will be chosen from each college

Please return this form to the SGA office (1st floor DUC), DUC information desk, college office (Potter, Ogden, etc.), or Residence Hall front desk by **March 9, 2000 at 4 p.m.**

Put on the Spring Brakes

STORY BY MICHELLE PEARSON

Murphy's law states: "Whatever can go wrong, will go wrong."

And when you're on vacation, wrong gets multiplied by five.

As students from Western and thousands of universities across the country embark on Spring Break — that time-honored tradition of seeking warm climates for the sole purpose of partying for an entire week and forgetting about exams and papers — the last thing on anyone's mind is caution.

"A lot of kids are on vacation for the first time without their parents," Campus police Capt. Mike Wallace said. "There are ways to prevent the unexpected or to at least minimize it."

Your first concern is getting to your destination. If driving, be sure the car is in good shape. Check the spare tire, get the oil changed, wear a seatbelt and keep the doors locked.

Also, don't pick up hitchhikers. Wallace said many hitchhikers have criminal records.

If possible, Wallace suggests taking a cell phone and extra money or credit cards in case of emergencies.

"The last thing anyone would want to do is to call mommy and daddy to wire more money," he said.

If you're leaving the United States, be aware of the laws and customs of the country you're visiting.

According to the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Consular Affairs, 2,500 Americans are arrested abroad each year — half are arrested for narcotics.

Some young people go abroad assuming they are immune from prosecution in foreign lands because they are American citizens. But Americans are expected to obey all of the laws of the countries they visit.

Saving your skin

Once you get to the beach, be careful with the tanning accelerator.

The whole point of Spring Break is to lay on white beaches and get the perfect dark tan. This might require hours of baking, turning and lathering oil on your skin.

But this practice for self-perfection can be dangerous. Too much time in the sun can mean serious wrinkles later in life, not to mention the possibility of sun stroke or heat stroke.

Teresa Edmundson, student health educator, said the best way to prevent this is to wear and regularly reapply waterproof sunscreen of at least 15 SPF (sun protection factor) and to drink lots of water, as opposed to carbonated drinks.

"The peak points of the sun are from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.," Edmundson said. "This is a good time to do alternative activities."

It's also a good idea to have a hat and T-shirt nearby and have access to a first-aid kit.

Responsible drinking

Spring Break is notorious for the epic amounts of alcohol students try to consume in one week.

"Don't do anything that might endanger your life or anyone else's," Wallace said. "Alcohol-related incidents tend to rise during Spring Break."

There were 2,492 traffic fatalities between March 10 and April 2 in 1995, according to Mothers Against Drunk Driving. Of that figure, 1,156 were alcohol-related. This number is higher than New Year's Eve and lower than prom week.

Edmundson said it's also important to know the symptoms of alcohol poisoning.

These symptoms include difficulty waking a person who is unconscious or semiconscious; cold, clammy, or pale or bluish tinged skin; slow breathing (eight times in one

minute) or irregular breathing (10 seconds between breaths); vomiting while sleeping or passed out and not waking.

If a person exhibits any of these symptoms, Edmundson said the first thing to do is to call 911. Don't leave the person alone and turn them on their side to prevent choking if they vomit again. It is also important to tell the emergency crew how much the person drank and what they drank.

Also, be careful when you go out at night. Always have a designated driver when you go out.

It's also important to keep an eye on one's drink. Edmundson said drinks should never be left unattended. It is always possible for someone to slip something into it, like the date-rape drug, Rohypnol.

"If you walk away from your drink for just a second, do

not go back and start drinking from it," Edmundson said. Edmundson also reminded students to be careful with sexual activity and respect the rights of others.

"Don't push anyone into sex," she said. "No means no."

The little things

Sometimes it is the little details that people forget such as safeguarding credit cards and not taking anything that can't be replaced such as engagement rings. It is also a good idea to take travelers checks and a minimum of cash. Calling cards are also a good idea. Be sure someone at home knows what you're up to, up to a point.

"Give someone a copy of your itinerary and check in periodically," Wallace said. "Have fun, but always be aware of the situation."

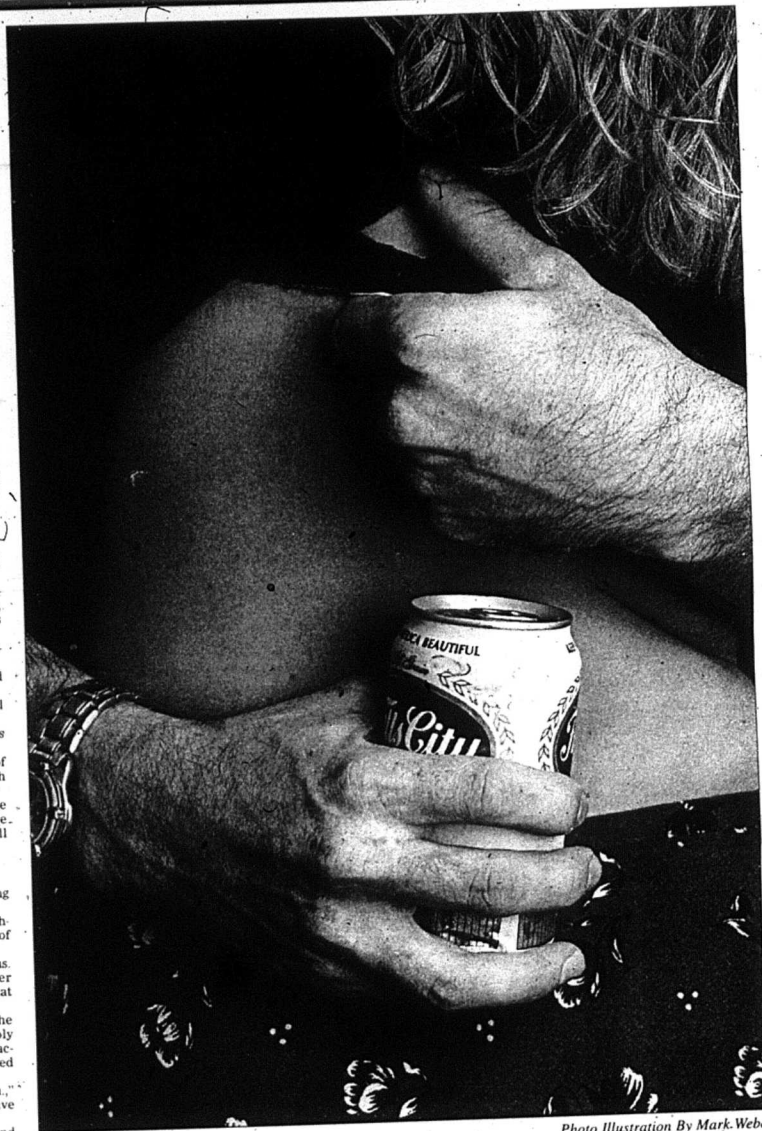


Photo Illustration By Mark Weber

A columnist, a road trip and a car named 'Betsy'...



SCHOOLHOUSE ROCK

Matt Batchelder

I don't know about you, but I'm ready for a break.

There comes a point in your college career, when you're a senior, when you question yourself.

How many more eight-page papers do I need to write? Doesn't everybody know I can make annotated bibliographies in MLA style, Chicago style, AP style and Sanskrit? I know my footnotes,

endnotes, headers, footers, gutters, mudders and poopier scoopers. People, I'm well past knowing for whom the bell tolls and why the caged bird sings.

Luckily, I and many of you will be able to roll these balls of stress down Interstate 65 toward that vast tropical mecca we call Florida. There we will plunge them in the semi-mild Atlantic brine and watch them dissolve as the tides

come in and out, in and out. In and out, in and out.

The rhythmic wave mantrá, \$1.49 gallons of gas away, is already bringing a little solace to my soul...

Yes, I'm heading to the Sunshine State Saturday. And not just any part of the state. I'll be dividing my time between Sarasota and Naples, in south Florida. Who knows, maybe my insatiable urge for warmer and

warmer temperatures will drive me to Miami.

This is a real departure from my usual Spring Break. Usually I'm home, somewhere in the Greater Bardstown metropolitan area, looking for good movies to rent. I've never been on a true Florida road trip.

SEE SCHOOLHOUSE, PAGE 8

Sunshine lures Hilltoppers to study outdoors

By CAROLINE LYNCH
Herald reporter

After his backpack was stolen in the library last week, Knoxville junior Troy Gritton decided he needed a change in study scenery. He wasn't alone.

In the last few days, students across Western's campus have been escaping the stale fluorescent glow of study-room lighting for a blast of bright spring sunlight.

They want sun. Or fresh air. Or a distraction. Or a place free from distraction. Whatever they're questing for, they are seeking out of the cracks to pursue good grades.

Kiss Me Quick Alley

The student: Gritton

The subject: religious studies

The reason: It's close to nature, relatively free from theft and quiet.

"It's a wonderful day — I've

seen birds and squirrels playing," Gritton said. "I think I get more done outside because it's life and peaceful."

Gritton sits, legs propped up on the bench, with a book in his lap — the picture of relaxation.

Karl Laves, a staff psychologist at the Counseling and Testing Center, said students should study where they feel comfortable.

"People get more out of their studies when they are calm," he said. "But they also have to be focused."

Fort Albert Sidney Johnson

The students: Jennifer Samples, a sophomore from Cookeville, Tenn., and two friends.

The subject: a play for her characterization class.

The reason: Her friends wanted to be there.

Sample said she was "dragged out here" by her friends, but she doesn't seem to mind too much.

"Most often I study in my room or in the study room," she said. "I really like to sit out here, but it can be a little distracting."

Laves said studying in groups can sometimes be a distraction, but is a good idea if the groups stay focused.

"If you get a group together, you can quiz each other," he said. "It isn't enough to just read the material, you have to practice it. That way you know what you know, and you know what you don't know."

The Colonnade

The students: Owensboro sophomore Tara Kassinger and Jonathan McGehee, a sophomore from Winslow, Ind.

The subjects: accounting, and calculus.

The reason: The library was just too hot.

The two girls sit under one of the fine arts center's walkways, shielded from the sun and the noise of passersby.

"Sometimes when I study in my room, I fall asleep," Kassinger said.

McGehee chimed in that his roommate often studies with the television on and the radio playing. He wanted someplace quieter.

Laves said these are the best places to study.

"Wherever you go to study, it should be a pleasant place," he said.

The Valley

The student: Nancy (freshman) Amy Merrick

The subject: government

The reason: cabin fever. Though it was Merrick's first study session outside, she was prepared: books, a towel, a cold drink, shorts and no shoes.

"I just got so tired of being inside," she said. "I've got cabin fever."

Merrick chose the spot because it was surrounded by grass and trees and free from the sound of

traffic.

"It's good for your spirit — it just puts you in a good mood to be outside."

The 27th floor of Pearce-Ford Tower

The student: Marion freshman Brooke Marshall

The subject: culture and communication

The reason: She can see the world.

"I love the view," she said. "I love to go up there and try to figure out what building that is, or what road."

The 27th floor of PFT is a huge study room that overlooks the seven surrounding counties. It relaxes Marshall without boring her.

No matter where you study, Laves stressed the importance of finding a place that works for you.

"You should go back to the place you studied when you made the highest grade," he said.

SCHOOLHOUSE: Exit 4 and Ramsey provide tunes

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

This year I'm driving solo, all the 15 hours to Florida to visit a couple of friends. It will have all the elements of a good drama: 15 hours in the car with few breaks, ever-increasing temperatures and a 1986 Ford Taurus with 120,000 miles.

As they say, getting there is half the fun. So if I see a billboard for world's largest hot dog, the Barry Manilow Wax Museum or an authentic UFO landing pad, I'm stopping in. That goes for all you "Amazing Rock Garden and Snake Pit" places, too.

The Taurus, or "Betsy" as its prior owner compelled me to call it, will have the test of its life.

Will I make it? Will I be converted to a fundamentalist religion by roadside preachers and be made to shave my hair and move to rural South Carolina? Will I be taken to Cuba in return for Elián Gonzales? Or will I fall asleep on the beach and die of sun poisoning?

You'll have to wait two weeks to find out. The next edition of Schoolhouse Rock comes to you from somewhere between here and paradise.

Mailbag

But it's no fun to just hear my stories. I want to hear your wild Spring Break adventures, too.

Feel free to drop me a line at batchme@wku.edu and tell me where you're headed, and tell me the 4-1-1 about your wild nights bar-hopping, soaking up the rays and romantic ententes. Yeah, baby!

SuperPicks

The Pick of the Weekend?

Duh! Spring Break! For once this semester, you guys and girls gotta leave town.

The question is: when do you leave?

Well, if you're still around town Saturday, you can catch the Bowling Green debut of Exit 4 and Ron Ramsey Jr. at Club Deluxe. The members of Exit 4 and Ramsey are all Western graduates from the mid '80s, and they're looking for your support.

They're promising a fun night Exit 4 bills itself as a cover band, playing tunes from Elvis to the Goo Goo Dolls. Ramsey, a former Nashville songwriter, will bring his original country material.

I'm no country aficionado, but I've listened to Ramsey's new CD, "Best Times," and Ramsey

has written some decent songs, even bringing a little variety to the stale country scene. Look for flutes, organ and honky-tonk piano in his set.

The show begins at 9 p.m., and the cover is a mere \$3. If you're still around town, go out and support your local scene.

Then get the hell outta town! Attention: applicants: be on the lookout for a long-haired, brown-eyed, 6-foot, 150-pound journalist in a blue 1980-something car, barreling down I-75 at a high rate of speed. Answers to the name "Matt." E-mail address: batchme@wku.edu. Or 109 Garrett Conference Center, Bowling Green, Ky. 42101.

MADAME MOONBEAM'S PREDICTIONS



ARIES

(Mar. 21-Apr. 20)

This is an excellent week to invest money or energy in a dark horse. Success can come from the most unexpected places. No one thought a software company run out of a garage would work, and look how well Bill Gates is doing. Get in now. If you wait any longer it will be after the fact.



TAURUS

(Apr. 21-May 20)

You hate to give up something for nothing, it's in your nature. But not all benefits are tangible. There's an opportunity coming your way, maybe spiritual or emotional. Don't let material thinking sabotage your prospects.



GEMINI

(May 21-June 21)

You may be reaching a comfortable place financially for the first time in months. Now that you're squared away, make sure you're up to date on obligations and unpaid debts. Someone you have left hanging could use a helping hand.



CANCER

(June 22-July 22)

All the pent-up aggression and stress you've been bottling up this semester has a good chance of bursting forth this week. You may have been biting your tongue for fear of offending those around you, but believe it or not, they'll be glad to hear it. They'd rather have a stress-free you who speaks their mind than a hostile you who has a stroke.



LEO

(July 23-Aug. 22)

So what looked good on paper doesn't quite carry over into reality. That's OK. Just work with what you have. Sometimes the best finished products have risen from the ashes of another failed idea.



VIRGO

(Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

So some stuff might go wrong this week. OK, a lot of stuff may go wrong this week. But look at it this way, pain is funny. At the end of the weird things that have happened to you and compare them to the blissful boring weeks you're friends had.

Get together with any Virgo friends you have and compare notes. The one with the best week has to buy the beer.



LIBRA

(Sept. 23-Oct. 23)

After months of feeling underappreciated and ignored, you're finally starting to get some recognition. The only problem is now that you're being singled out, you have to be ready to be the object of envy. Whether you're a suck-up or just a great student, people are petty and mean to the teacher's pet. It's inevitable. Look at it this way: it's better to be talked about than ignored.



SCORPIO

(Oct. 24-Nov. 22)

Ease up! You're so focused on one area of your life, probably work or school, that you could be taken unaware by another. Stay flexible. Relax

and take advantage of Spring Break. Otherwise you'll end up on Jerry Springer with your significant other shouting "My workaholic boyfriend doesn't satisfy me!"



SAGITTARIUS

(Nov. 23-Dec. 21)

Don't jump the gun on a long-term project. If you're unsure, it's probably still in the planning stages. Don't be pressured into premature work by your co-workers. Just because people want to begin doesn't mean they're ready. It just means they're impatient.



CAPRICORN

(Dec. 22-Jan. 20)

You're having some serious intimacy issues right now, like not getting any of it. Yes, it's lonely now, but there is something wonderful on the horizon. Keep your eyes open for that special someone in the upcoming week.



AQUARIUS

(Jan. 21-Feb. 18)

Okay, you've kept your options open (also known as putting off a decision) as long as humanly possible. It's time to make a commitment to whatever path you may choose. It will be a relief to actually be doing something instead of constantly sitting around analyzing the situation.



PISCES

(Feb. 19-Mar. 20)

If you look for trouble, you're probably going to find it. If you can get through your day without a gnawing worry at the pit of your stomach, be grateful for the reprieve. Don't worry about not worrying. Live with whatever peace you can find.

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Hours: Wednesday from 10 AM to 3 PM and at the Department for Employment Services, 805 Chestnut Street, Bowling Green, KY 42101 from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM through March 16, 2000.

The scheduled examination date is March 18, 2000, Saturday, at 8:00 AM.

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FORENSICS: National championships next

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

with their head coach. Woodring is afraid to fly.

"If I could close my eyes and snap my fingers and be there in a heartbeat, I'd love to be there with these students," she said. "But because I'm so apprehensive of flying, it wouldn't be pleasant for anyone."

"My joy is for them to go," she added. "I'm a nervous wreck until I get a phone call saying how they did."

Taking Woodring's place in Paris will be Andy Billings, a friend of the coach and head of Clemson University's forensics program. He also accompanied the team to Rome.

He said it was rewarding to go with the team to the championships.

"They listened to me, and they respected me," he said. "I like the feeling that I contributed and helped put them over the top."

Woodring does fly when she feels it is necessary, she said. She will fly to the national championship, because it means more to the team than a

world championship.

"It's like UK winning the national basketball championship," she said. "You're competing with your friends and peers instead of being in Rome with people you don't know."

The team actually has two chances to win a national title this year. It will compete for the Delta Sigma Rho, a national honors society, championship later this month. Western has won either debate or individual titles every year since 1993.

Next month they will compete against schools from all over the country for the National Forensic Association title.

The trip to Paris won't be all business for the team. The competition ends Tuesday, and the team is staying until Friday. They plan on seeing the sights, including possible trips to Normandy, the Louvre and the palace at Versailles.

"I want to see the Eiffel Tower in the day and at night," said Florence junior Shellei Knuckles.



Andrew Otto/Herald

Nine of the Western Forensics traveling team members (from left, Jace Lux, a senior from Evansville, Ind., Andrew Chamberlain, a freshman from Franklin, Tenn., Versailles senior Julie Robinson, Shelbyville senior Kerri Richardson, Florence sophomore Alisa Ponananta, Keith Blaser, a freshman from Evansville, Ind., Matt Gerbig, a senior from Evansville, Ind., Morehead sophomore John Allen and Florence junior Shellei Knuckles) will attend a world championship tournament in Paris, France, where they will defend last year's first place world title.

Review

Movie fails to live up to 'Best' name

"The Next Best Thing"
Grade: F

BY MICHAEL COMPTON
Herald reporter

There are bad movies, and then there are movies like "The Next Best Thing."

It's not just bad, it's unimaginably bad. It's the kind of movie so painful to watch that when it's over you want those two hours of your life back.

Madonna and Rupert Everett star as Abbie and Robert. Robert is Abbie's best friend. They would make the perfect couple, except for the fact that Robert is gay. Their relationship changes, thanks to a lot of alcohol, when they sleep together and Abbie gets pregnant.

They decide to move in together and raise their child as a family, while at the same time staying single and

involved in their own relationships. And do they live happily ever after?

If the film had any compassion for its audience, they would. Instead, we get the expected "your father is 'different' talk," the "girl meets another guy and the best friend becomes jealous" scene, and finally, the excruciatingly lame "my fiancé wants us to move cross-country" plot device.

This last development leads to a court custody wrap-up that would have been much better suited for "Kramer vs. Kramer."

I couldn't help but stare at the screen in jaw-dropping awe while watching the film's plot — and I use that term loosely — develop. Instead of a smooth, transitional flow, the screenplay seems to be nothing more than a brainstorm of story ideas.

Madonna and Everett have zero romantic chemistry. They come off as a really bad vaudeville act throwing one-

liners at each other.

Madonna is, to put it nicely, limited as an actress. I get the feeling that she wanted the role for three reasons. One, it gives her a forum to voice her opinion on gay rights and single motherhood. Two, the movie is basically an infomercial for yoga. And three, it is a great marketing tool to promote her new album. The movie is so unfathomably bad, I still can not believe Rupert Everett agreed to do it. He is a very good actor, who didn't get the credit he deserved after "My Best Friend's Wedding."

Unfortunately, he is stuck in a movie that does more harm than good in its attempt at showing a gay lifestyle.

The film tries too hard to be a social statement. Ultimately, it is nothing more than another movie that uses gay stereotypes to water down the subject.

The result is a movie that may pander to the masses, but artistically falls short of its goal.

SGA Elections

* Executive Office 2.5 GPA, 30 hours at time of candidacy, 1 year as a member of SGA or Judicial exemption, and VP of Finance 3 hours of accounting.

* Congress for Fall of 2000 sophomore, junior, senior, graduate, and non traditional positions

March 9 Applications Available

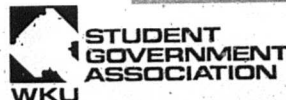
March 23 Application Deadline

March 23 Certification Meeting

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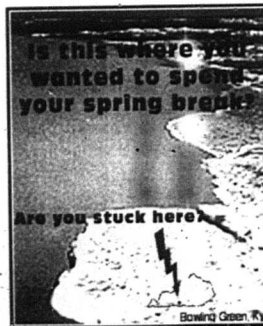
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News of the Weird by Chuck Shepherd

No kidding

A 45-year-old man was identified by police in February as the one who had recently tapped as many as 100 vials of water to trees in Milwaukee and suburbs. He had not been charged with a crime at press time. He told police that he was testing the frequencies of radio stations because one of them had been bombarding him with signals. Though he did not explain the role of the vials, he vowed to send the test results to the FCC. The man's son, 17, said he was a good father but that he sometimes neglects his medication.

Take my leg, please!

Barely six months after the murder conviction of San Diego surgeon John Ronald Brown, whose patient died while voluntarily having a healthy leg removed, a hospital in Scotland announced that it has been the site of two similar but successful surgeries in the last three years, on patients so dissatisfied with their bodies that they have a psychological need, called apotemnophilia, to have a healthy limb removed. Surgeon Robert Smith said he was troubled by his patients' needs but ultimately performed the operations at no charge because the patients were so distraught, one having earlier shot himself in the leg to improve the chances a surgeon would agree to amputate.

How much did he tip?

New York City firefighter Albert Hohmann was arrested in February after being identified by police as the man who, naked, sneaked into a restaurant at night and snacked on expensive wine and cheese. Hohmann's lawyer denied the charge despite the fact that the restaurant's surveillance camera was running and that the intruder sported an easily identifiable tattoo of Mr. Peanut on his derrière.

Redefining oppression

In December, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals offered 350 homeless shelters

in the U.S. and 34 more in Canada holiday "torturekeys," to be shaped to resemble turkey parts. One PETA coordinator claimed, "Homeless people especially can empathize with those who are oppressed."

Politics gets ugly, er

E.H. Dennis, 77, was convicted in Greensboro, N.C., in January of scaring attendees at a 1998 Guilford County Commission meeting by making an explicit bomb threat against commissioners if he didn't get his way in a land use dispute.

According to a videotape of the meeting, Dennis calmly described how commissioners' body parts would be strewn around the area after the bomb went off. During a break in testimony at his trial, Dennis left the courtroom and stepped over to the elections office, where he left a \$147 cashier's check as a filing fee to run for a seat on the commission.

Reading too much into math

In December, the Education Ministry in Turkey asked a math publisher not to use the letters "p" and "k" in algebra equations because they could form the acronym for the rebel Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK). The ministry suggested instead the letters c, f, g, h.

Ahhh, true love

In October, Linda Pugach bailed her husband, Burton, 69,

out of jail after his arrest for threatening to kill his mistress of five years.

The couple have a history of problems. In 1959, Linda was blinded in both eyes by a lye attack arranged by Burton after she spurned his marriage proposal. After his release from prison in 1974 and went on a TV-show campaign to win her heart, and a few months later, she married him.

Asked by a reporter her reaction to Burton's current paramour, Linda responded, "Did you call Hillary and ask her how she feels?"

Nice try

In September, Robert Meier, 55, was arrested for fraud and theft in Tampa, Fla., for a sham marriage to a comatose woman and for his subsequent purchases of almost \$200,000 on her credit cards. According to a sheriff's detective, Meier said the woman's dog told him to use her credit cards to live a better life after she died.

Too weird to ignore

The publisher of the "For Dummies" book series donated \$350 million to MIT for brain research. A Spanish furniture store floor collapsed, injuring 161 shoppers in a frenzy to buy 36 \$229 armchairs marked down to \$18. A 51-year-old man, who sustained broken ribs after being hit by a bus, was billed \$850 for damage to the bus.

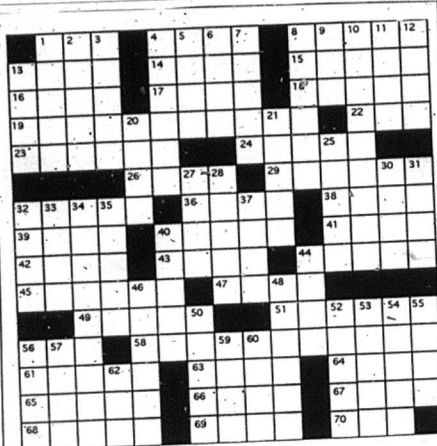
WEEKEND SHOWCLOCK

Greenwood 6

The Next Best Thing
Fr., Mon-Thurs. 1, 3, 45, 7, 9:20
Hanging Up
Fr., Mon-Thurs. 1:30, 4, 7, 15, 9:20
Snow Day
Fr., Mon-Thurs. 1:15, 3:15, 5:15, 7:15
The Tiger Movie
Fr., Mon-Thurs. 1:30, 3:30, 6, 8, 9:50
Sat. and Sun. 7:30, 9:30
My Dog Skip
Fr., Mon-Thurs. 1:10, 3:10, 5:10, 7:10, 9:10
Mission To Mars
Fr., Mon-Thurs. 1, 4, 7, 15, 9:45

Plaza 6

Scream 3
Fr., Mon-Thurs. 1, 4, 7, 15, 9:40
Reindeer Games
Fr., Mon-Thurs. 1:15, 4:30, 7, 9:15
The Whole Nine Yards
Fr., Mon-Thurs. R 1:30, 3:45, 7:30, 9:45
Pitch Black
Fr., Mon-Thurs. 4, 9:15
Drowning Mona
Fr., Mon-Thurs. 1:10, 3:10, 5:10, 7:10, 9:10
The Ninth Gate
Fr., Mon-Thurs. 1, 4, 7, 9:45
What Planet Are You From
Fr., Mon-Thurs. R 1:30, 7:15



© Puzzle Features Syndicate

Across

1. Commercials
4. O'er yonder
8. Tight hold
13. Inter ... among other things
14. Pet's home
15. Bowman
16. Man's nickname
17. Piece of furniture
18. Put aside for later
19. Living free ... earning barely enough
22. Suppositions
23. Penicillin's kind
24. Pronoun
26. Thirst quenchers
29. Yellow and red
32. Musical passages
38. Bridge
38. Image
39. Racetrack
40. The ... Best Picture Oscar winner of 1973
41. Carson's successor
42. Weather condition
43. Skin mark
44. Nincompoops
45. Cling
47. Speak imperfectly
49. Bakery purchase
51. Read carefully
56. Bossy's greeting
58. Unable to be fixed
61. Hastily
63. Spanish passion
64. Blessing
65. Whittle
66. Mound
67. Family member
68. Cuit
69. Benevolent, protective ones
70. Common contraction

Down

1. Priest's place
2. Famous princess
3. Smooths
4. Agreement
5. Work the soil
6. Exchange fee
7. Disprove
8. Collect

9. Wedge-shaped inlet
10. Distinctive atmospheres
11. Word with him or my
12. Leader's title, abbr.
13. Racket-wielding Arthur
20. Afternoon affairs
21. Item of footwear
25. Leaves shore
27. This, Sp.
28. Tumble
30. Away
31. Baseball's Slaughter
32. Unconscious state
33. Poet who was exiled in B.A.D.
34. Speedometer's spot
35. Revise
37. Prefix for septid or thesis
40. Make a solemn declaration
44. Copycat
46. Checked
48. Has mercy on
50. Window covering
52. Ordained one
53. Unsubstantiated, family
54. Messy ones
55. Meekly
56. Spice
57. Independent sultanate
59. Actor Jennings
60. 11th president
62. Got a Secret

Answer to last week's puzzle:

ADOS AFAR GRASP
ALLIA CAGE ATMER
STAN CRIB TABLE
HANDT MOUTH IFS
ERASER THESE
ADOS ORANGE
CODAS SPAN TCON
OVAL STING LENO
MIST WELT ASSES
ADHERE LISP
BREAD PERUSE
MOO TREPAREABLE
AMAIN AMOR BOON
CARVE PITLE BABY
ENDED ELKS ITS

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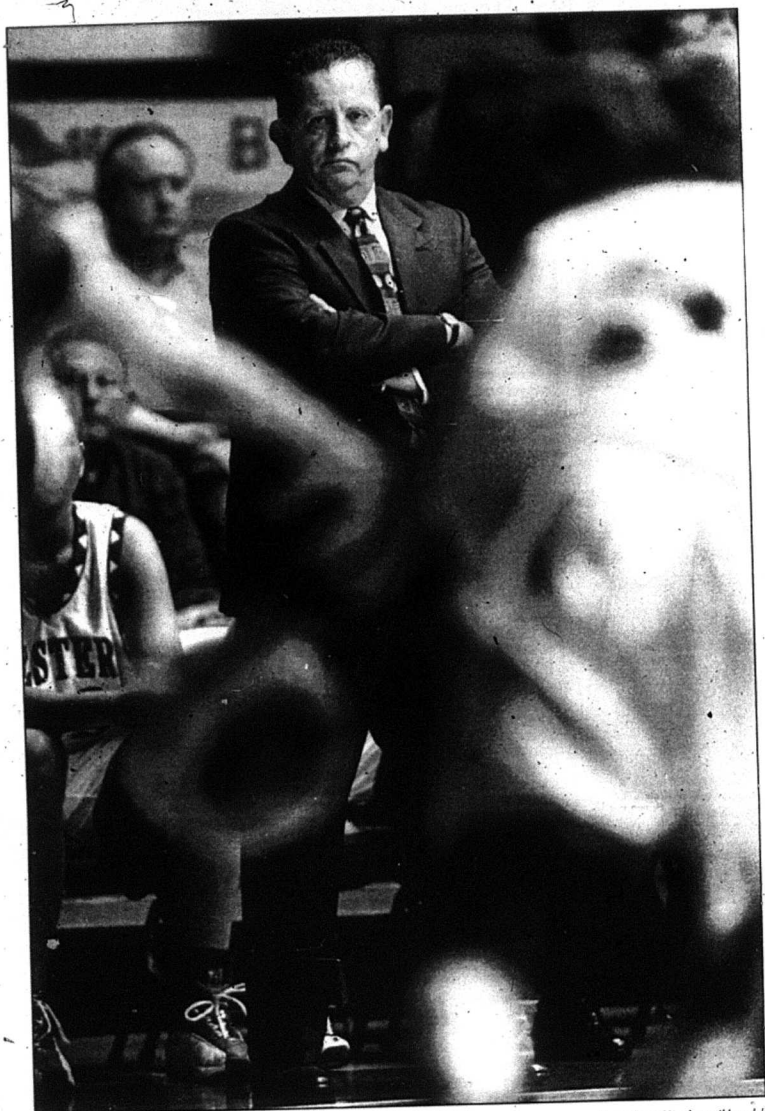
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Sports

11



Jonathan Kirshner/Herald

Neither harsh criticism nor thin personnel have stopped Coach Steve Small and his Lady Toppers. They enter the Sun Belt Conference Tournament today confident and ready to prove more people wrong.

No Small Feat

By Jerry Brewer

The big-eared man does not whisper. Back in timid times he stuttered, so now he speaks loudly.

Steve Small does not yell, but his voice severs the air like a 747. Sometimes, he gets excited and loses you in his thoughts. Sometimes, he doesn't. Talk. In complete sentences.

Mostly, though, Small is the master communicator, a motivator who can flick on humor and compassion in the same conversation.

Small, 51, in his third season as head coach of the Western women's basketball team, is preparing the Lady Toppers (19-8) for another postseason run. They are hosting the Sun Belt Conference Tournament this weekend and a couple more wins would probably ensure them an NCAA Tournament bid.

But all around him there is buzzing and questioning of his ability as a coach. Whispers whiz through Diddle Arena like cars on a raceway, and there is loud, proud

Steve, standing in the infield, ignoring the race to figure whether he is a good or bad coach.

Portions of Western fans doubt Small. They don't sting, they never complain to his face, but they burr on Internet message boards. Small says he can't hear them, says he can't worry about them, says they have no significance on his life. But he knows.

And so he speaks above the whispers.

"You can't hurt me," Small said. "I don't give a hell what you write. I don't give a hell what you say."

Understanding Small

Excuse that his wife nicknamed him Big Toy because he's great with their 6-year-old. Excuse that he loves mowing the yard and that he keeps the garage tidy and that he cleans the toilet occasionally.

SEE SMALL, PAGE 13

Lady Toppers plan to feast on SBC field

What's at stake?
An NCAA tourney bid

By LYNDSEY SUTTON
Herald reporter

If basketball games are the main staple for teams across the country, then March Madness is the king of all buffet lines.

It's the cake and the icing.

It's the ice cream and the hot fudge.

It's the hamburger and the cheese.

"When you're 19-8 and you've overachieved and you've done what we've done, not only are the coaches relaxed, but I think the players are really satisfied and a little bit hungry for a little bit more," Lady Topper coach Steve Small said. "It makes it a whole lot of fun."

March Madness, also known as postseason action, officially begins at 6 tonight for the No. 2-seeded Lady Toppers (19-8, 13-3 Sun Belt Conference) as they take on No. 7 seed Louisiana-Lafayette in a quarterfinal game of the Sun Belt Conference Tournament in Diddle Arena.

Western beat the Ragin' Cajuns (12-15, 5-11) in both of their meetings this season. The Lady Toppers won 104-66 in Bowling Green on Jan. 13, and eked out a 77-67 victory in Lafayette on Feb. 10.

Overlooking this team, though, wouldn't be smart.

It'd be like a loaf of bread without the flour; the results could be disastrous and unedible. More so now, because it's March — a month ripe for upsets.

SEE FEAST, PAGE 18

Baseball loses, falls below .500

Tops lose third straight;
pitching woes concern Murrie

By SCOTT SISCO
Herald reporter

Western pitcher Jeff Lincoln said hello to every Yale batter but one in the first inning of Tuesday's game at Denes Field.

Lincoln gave the first two, freshman outfielder Chris Elkins and sophomore outfielder Steve Dankof, free passes to first base. Then junior second baseman Brian Ivy singled to load the bases and senior shortstop Tony Coyne drove in Elkins with a single.

Three more Bulldogs were greeted at home before the Hilltoppers had a chance to meet Yale's pitcher. Yale added one more run in the top of the fifth inning for a 5-3 win.

"When you come out and you let them score three or four runs in the first inning, it gives them momentum," junior center fielder Matt Fox said. "It gives them confidence against us and that's something that we can't let them have 'cause we're not playing well ... so we need to jump out early and be the ones who set the tone early in the game."

Lincoln had three walks in his three innings of work and only one strikeout. His replacements, junior John Batsch and senior Jeff Vance, added three and two walks, respectively.

"I think any time you don't throw strikes you're going to be in a bad situation," Western coach Joel Murrie said. "We've given up too many runs early in the game, and we need to be a little more proficient in the way we execute in all facets, not just in the middle or late innings, but early in the game."

The Toppers came back in the top of the second inning.

SEE BASEBALL, PAGE 14

Softball squad searching for direct line to victory

Lady Toppers hope to pluck Cardinals

By JOE COX
Herald reporter

Amber Garlington needs a phone booth.

Maybe if she had the phone booth, the freshman pitcher could change from her red and white uniform with "Western" emblazoned across the shirt to something a little more appropriate.

Maybe a shirt with a big red "S."

Garlington doesn't claim to be Superwoman, but she continues to play as if she could be.

Tuesday, she pitched her third shutout of the season, fanning 13 in the first game of the Lady Toppers' doubleheader sweep of Belmont (12-15).

Wednesday, she beat Tennessee-Martin (2-2) in a 2-1 squeaker to lead off a doubleheader, and then saved the second game, a 6-4 Western win.

"I don't feel like I'm throwing with much velocity," Garlington said. "But I guess I can't be picky."

On Tuesday, the Lady Toppers (12-5-1) made life much easier for Garlington and fellow Freshman pitcher Katie

"I think we're ... confident in ourselves. We know that we're a good ball team."

— Cassie Palmer
Lady Topper junior catcher

Swertfager, who picked up her first win of the season in the second game.

Freshman shortstop Sara Alanis homered twice in the first game as the Lady Toppers rolled 10-0. Junior third baseman Shannon Searle and junior catcher Cassie Palmer also homered in the rout.

The Lady Toppers also homered four times in the 11-2 victory to close the doubleheader. Searle's second-homer of the day and Swertfager's 5 RBIs were among the highlights.

Wednesday's competition was a bit tougher.

Garlington held Tennessee-Martin to only three hits and an unearned run in the third inning, striking out 12 while running her record to 8-2.

Her third-inning ground out scored freshman outfielder Jessie Richardson to tie the score, and her seventh-inning single allowed sophomore pinch

runner Sara Beth Heaton to score the winning run.

In the second game, Western jumped out to a 2-1 lead on a Searle single in the third inning. The Skyhawks countered with a run in the fourth and two in the fifth. Western rallied to tie the game at four on a two-run double by Palmer in the home half of the fifth.

"I think we're ... confident in ourselves," Palmer said. "We know that we're a good ball team."

In the bottom of the sixth, Richardson brought the home run back into the Western arsenal with a two-run shot, bringing the score to 6-4.

Garlington came in to relieve Swertfager in the seventh and proceeded to pick up her first save, setting the Skyhawks down in order.

The Lady Toppers' next action will be on Saturday when they play at Louisville, another first-year program, in what will be the first game for the Cardinals at their new field.

Western coach Leslie Phelan said Louisville will provide the Lady Toppers with even tougher competition.

"Frankly, I expect Louisville to be the best team we've played this year," she said.

It'll be a little delayed, but check out all the Lady Topper and Sun Belt women's basketball stories after Spring Break in the

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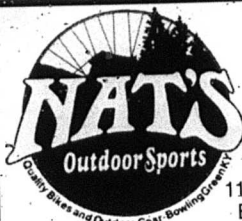
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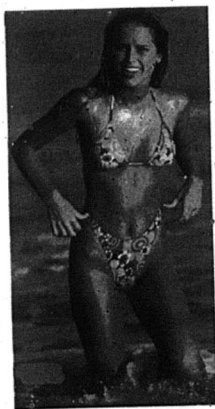


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CHH

SMALL: Coach has team on brink of NCAA tourney

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

Excuse that he forgot about basketball when his wife said, "Honey, I have Hodgkin's Disease." Excuse that he teaches his players lessons he learned while chatting with the janitor. Excuse that he tells jokes in practice, and that his critics think he's too nice, and that, as a head coach, he's never pucker up to a conference championship trophy. Three years have passed since he replaced King Paul, and excuse that there is the illusion that he has taken the program nowhere. He gave the Lady Toppers a new pride and a new heart and someone to blame. His hair is slicked back, his ears are big and goofy, and he has won 66 of 91 games and motivated the once indifferent and charged a little team that could. Some fans think on one day ousting him, one day pulling him out like weeds, and excuse that the criticism sometimes makes him pissed.

"We're not naïve," senior forward Jamie Britt said. "We know what's going on. But we have enough faith in Coach Small. He knows what he's doing."

He knows winning. That's what the stats say. He has won 72.5 percent of his games as the Lady Topper coach. And this comes after 14 years of winning under Coach Paul Sanderford, the former Lady Topper king who is credited with building this program strong.

Since the bedrock departed, people have feared the program's demise. A mid-major program is bound to fail without the right guidance, they say. It's been two years since Western, once a perennial top 25 team, has been in the polls. Some Western followers have gulped double shots of fickle.

It has caused whispers. Last season, Western failed to make the NCAA Tournament, despite a 21-7 record. It was only the second time in 15 years. It caused whispers.

Injuries, recruiting losses, transfers, quitters and academic casualties have all contributed to the thin, nine-woman roster that Western has used the last half of this season. More whispers.

"I hate to spend time on what if," Small said. "There will be more heartaches that I have to deal with than how many kids I have on my basketball team. That's for you to write. True fans will be with you through thick and thin. People who love the program will be with you. You

listen to your heart, and you listen to what's around you. And that's all.

"I'm not trying to prove anything to anybody after 28 years of coaching. You could write that Coach Small is (66-25), so what am I proving? I don't worry about things I can't control. Life is a big L and a big E with a big IF in the middle. You take care of all the ifs."

"What else you want to know? You know I don't talk much."

A different perspective

In the fast times of college basketball where coaches jump to the highest bidder and win-at-any-cost is the motto, Small is an outsider. This is pleasant to some and despicable to others.

Excuse him if he learned that basketball wasn't important during a road trip about 15 years ago. He was an assistant here at the time, and the Lady Toppers had lost to a nationally-ranked foe, even though Western had more talent.

The bus was full of red faces. The coaches were perplexed and frustrated. Small glanced out the window, saw a disabled woman trying to cross the street. He jumped out of the bus and offered to help. She had a walker, but she wanted to cross the street without it. After many attempts and a traffic jam, she started walking. She finally made it across.

Small hopped back on the bus. All was still quiet.

"It's all right," he yelled. "It's all right!"

After that, the players rested easy.

"I've been around him for 16 years, and I really have yet to hear him badmouth anybody," said physical education and recreation professor Biff Kummer. "He'll either change the subject or drive away from the subject. He'll say, 'I don't care much for that fella,' and that's it. To shy away, to not get involved in badmouthing. I believe that shows strength in people."

Small's success may be clouded by not making the NCAA Tournament last season, but he is getting the best out of his players. Seldom-used athletes and forgotten former phenoms are blossoming. Every player who has come through Small in three years has improved.

His coaching philosophy is to use all his personnel — from the assistant coaches to the players to the managers. He jokes about how he is not the smartest man, and he needs help. After he named Mary



Cara VanLeuven/Herald

Coach Steve Small has a 66-25 record after three seasons as head coach. After losing six of their first 11 games this season, the Lady Toppers are in position to make the NCAA Tournament.

Taylor Cowles his associate head coach three years ago, he told her she could be his "right-hand and left-hand woman."

His players, perhaps not as talented as those on previous Western teams, play free. They have fun all the time. They struggled at the beginning of this season, starting 5-6, but they never lost confidence. They have won 14 of their last 16 games.

They joke about Small's 17-year-old Ampsuit, Pinky, which is so old that the red is fading. Pinky is mysteriously missing now, and Small has found several ransom notes around Diddle Arena.

Some whisper about the silliness.

"Coach Small is doing just fine," said junior forward ShaRae Mansfield. "He's great, and he fits with this team. We know what people are saying out there. We hear things. Not to be mean, but I think they need to keep their mouths shut."

Family values

Small's wife, Merigay, gets to see his mellow side. He has more jokes, more sayings, more stories than most entertainers, but, at home, he is calm.

"Not sullen, not prone to bad

moods, but mellow," Merigay says.

Small watched Merigay beat Hodgkin's Disease 20 years ago. This was back when Small was a high school coach at Bullitt East, the second stop on his journey from middle school to college athletics. Small's girls were trying to advance to the regional tournament, led late in the game and then lost down the stretch.

And then Merigay discovers she had this disease. For the next seven months, she went through chemotherapy.

"I wore a lot of different wigs then," Merigay said. "Steve would always tell everybody, 'I'm the only man who gets to go to bed with a different-haired woman every night.' Even though I was going through that, losing weight and my hair, I never felt that Steve thought I was unattractive."

Small does not view the breaks in life as tragedies, and he does not live tragically. He owes that to his father, Tony, who was in Germany when World War II began. The Small family, which is Jewish, was put in concentration camps. Small lost his grandparents, but his father escaped to America. Small reminisces in a soft tone, but he is

hardly whispering.

The family grew up in poverty, but they kissed the American flag every day.

"I'm not any better than anybody else," Small said. "I'm just a speck of sand like you. I respect life. I just learned to respect life. I'm going to have enough hard times, enough appointments to deal with."

"I used to fight people because they said I had big ears. I used to worry about it. I don't now. I like who I am. I'm not perfect. I'm not even close. I'm trying to give back to players, university. It's just positive. Makes me feel good being around it. That's what it's all about. I've always said misery is optional."

"It was optional even when a disgruntled parent pulled a gun on him after he lost a high school game some 20 years ago. It's optional even when he pauses to stop talking about the joy of life and allows whispers, those damn whispers, to seep into his mind."

"If somebody wants to see me cry because I lost a basketball game, they're gonna have to wait — until the next life," Small said.

You heard him. He doesn't stutter. Not anymore. Not now.

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Jeremy Lyverse/Herald

Yale junior designated hitter R.D. DeSantis is tagged out at the plate by Western senior catcher Curtis Bliss Tuesday night at Denes Field. Western lost the game 5 to 3.

BASEBALL: Ark.-Little Rock next

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

After Western turned a double play to end the Bulldogs' half, senior left fielder Kevin Clutter scored on a single by junior first baseman Eric Hammer. Sophomore third baseman Tanner Townsend introduced Fox to home plate with a sacrifice ground ball to cut the lead to two.

The second inning ended when Western junior second baseman Brian Houdek grounded to second and came within a welcome mat's breadth of beating the throw. Houdek contested the call when he heard Houdek say something else and threw him out of the game.

Yale coach John Stuper contested the third out in the top of

the fifth inning and was also introduced to the bleachers. Senior catcher Curtis Bliss tagged out junior designated hitter R.D. DeSantis while he blocked the plate to end the fifth.

"When you get ejected, sometimes that can help your team, sometimes it can hurt it," Stuper said. "What it did for them is they kept their cool."

Yale senior pitcher Sudha Reddy sat down the first two batters of the fifth inning, walked Bliss, then got him out at second on a grounder from Clutter to end the inning.

The Toppers found home one more time in the sixth inning when Townsend hit a sacrifice fly to score Fox. Western threatened again in the eighth inning with two runners in scoring position, but two straight popouts

ended the inning.

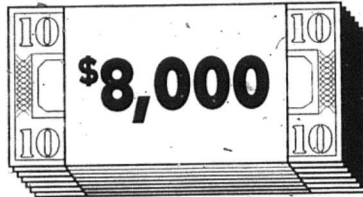
The Hilltopper defense held the last four innings, not allowing a baserunner past second base after the fifth inning.

"Every inning is important unfortunately we're not playing a complete game right now," Murrie said. "We're just not playing up to our level of expectations and, as for the reason why, I'm sort of baffled at this point."

Hammer went 3 for 3 with an RBI while Fox was 1 for 2 with two runs scored to lead the Hilltoppers. Yale sophomore right fielder Keith Reams led the Bulldogs with a perfect 4 for 4 day at the plate and one RBI.

The Hilltoppers open conference play this weekend with a three-game series at Arkansas-Little Rock beginning at 3 p.m. Friday.

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Novotney gets treatment

Pitcher expected to return in three weeks

BY BRIAN MOORE
Herald reporter

Western's baseball pitching staff just isn't the same without him.

Fifth-year senior Josh Novotney, a highly-touted pitcher entering the 2000 campaign, has been nursing a sore elbow caused by strained ligaments, and he hasn't been on the mound since Jan. 28. That's when he pitched seven innings and gave up just two runs in the

Hilltoppers' second game of the season against No. 1-ranked Florida State.

Novotney visited with James Andrews, a doctor in Birmingham, Ala., on Monday. Andrews is the same doctor who treated Chicago Cubs hurler Kerry Wood when he had elbow problems last summer. Andrews told Novotney he will not need surgery on the elbow and expects him to be back to 100 percent in about three weeks. "I'm feeling all right. I'll throw," Novotney said. "If I'm sore, I won't. I might throw next Wednesday against Yale, but we'll just have to see how things go. If I don't, then my goal is three weeks."

Coach Joel Murrie said Novotney brings experience to the pitching staff, which is struggling.

"A lot of the growing pains we're seeing, Josh went through four years ago," Murrie said. "The poise and confidence Josh has is an example of his experience. We have a lot of players who have outstanding ability who haven't brought it out to the playing field. Josh has."

Novotney was named to the South Region second team by the National Collegiate Baseball Writers Association following his junior season. He finished 1999 with an 8-4 record, a 3.78 earned run average and set a school record with 102 strikeouts.

FEAST: Lady Tops play tonight

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

And if there ever was a Cinderella-like team in the Sun Belt, it's Louisiana-Lafayette, a team that has won 11 more games than last season. It upset Arkansas State 74-71 in Jonesboro, Ark. on Feb. 17.

"They're (Louisiana) just a scrappy bunch," senior forward Jamie Britt said. "They're laying it on the line. They have nothing to lose. They're going to play hard. So we have to stick to our game plan and not play their kind of wild, aggressive game."

"We have to control the tempo, control the boards and come out on top."

Western outbounded the Ragin' Cajuns 48-34 in Diddle Arena and 40-33 in Lafayette

The Lady Toppers also set the nets on fire in Bowling Green, shooting a sizzling 58 percent in the first game, while holding the visitors to 31 percent.

"I think JB (Britt) and I will emphasize that before the game and stuff that we gotta treat this like it's (No. 3) La Tech," senior guard Jaime Walz said. "Anything happens in March it's upset city so we gotta be ready each game."

The Lady Toppers believe advancing to the championship game on Saturday night will secure them an at-large bid to the NCAA tournament — if they don't win the championship game. La Tech (25-2, 16-0), winner of 41 straight conference games, is expected to win the tournament for the fifth straight time.

"We are definitely looking

forward to playing La Tech," All-American junior forward ShaRae Mansfield said. "We see ourselves playing them in the championship game. We just have that confidence. We're ready to end their win streak."

Sun Belt All-Conference Selections named

Britt, Walz and Mansfield were all named to the Sun Belt All-Conference team yesterday. Mansfield was a unanimous selection. La Tech's Betty Lennox, a senior guard, was named Sun Belt Player of the Year. Denver coach Pam Tanner is Coach of the Year after leading the Lady Pioneers to a tie for third in the conference. Denver was chosen to finish sixth in the preseason.

WESTERN SPORTS SCORECARD

Team	W-L	Next
Women's basketball	19-8	Tonight vs. Louisiana-Lafayette
Men's Tennis	7-6	March 28 vs. Austin Peay
Women's Tennis	0-5	March 13 vs. Sacramento in Hawaii
Baseball	7-8	Friday at Arkansas-Little Rock
Softball	12-5-1	Saturday at Louisville

Sun Belt Tournament

South Alabama rises in opener

Eighth-seeded South Alabama outlasted No. 9 seed Arkansas-Little Rock, 73-58, in last night's Sun Belt Conference tournament opener in Diddle Arena.

Lady Trojan freshman guard Muci Harris left the game with an injury midway through the first half and never returned, opening the door for South Alabama. She had been averaging 16.7 points per game.

Holding onto a 28-23 halftime advantage, the Lady Jaguars rolled in the second half. Sophomore center Bell Jordan hit for 17 points and pulled down 7 rebounds.

Former Warren Central star Jamene Curd added 8 points. Arkansas-Little Rock had three double-figure scorers, led by center Medtha Shoro and forward Eplunus Brooks, who both had 18 points.

The Lady Trojans did outbounce South Alabama, 45-35, but committed 20 turnovers. The Lady Jaguars dished out 22 assists and 15 turnovers.

Just a reminder, here's tomorrow's tournament schedule:

Noon — No. 5 Arkansas State vs. No. 4 Denver

2:30 p.m. — No. 8 South Alabama vs. No. 1 La Tech

6 p.m. — No. 2 Western vs. No. 7 Louisiana-Lafayette

8:30 p.m. — No. 6 New Orleans vs. No. 3 Florida Int.

— Travis Mayo



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